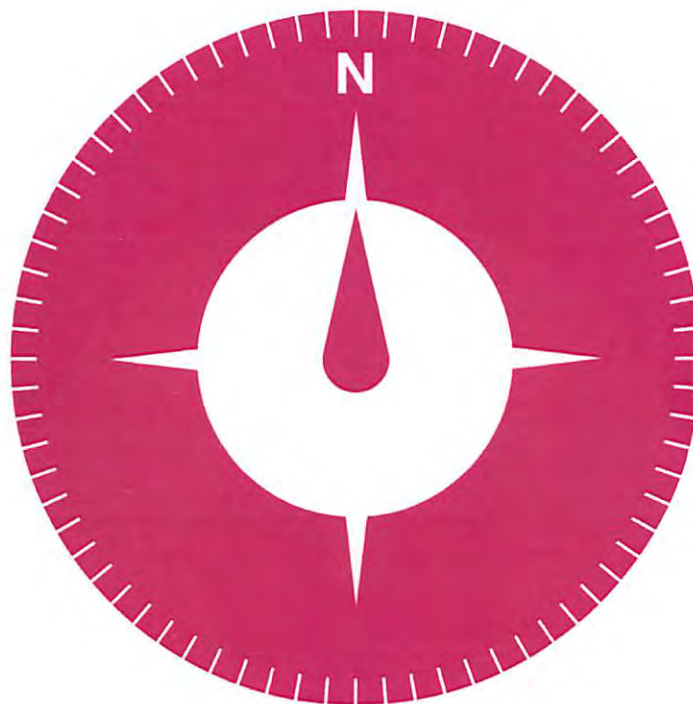




RMS Lusitania & Safety of Life at Sea

Michael Kingston, Partner, Marine Trade & Energy Group, DWF LLP

*United States Coast Guard Headquarters
US Coast Guard Stop 7430
2703 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington DC
20593-7430*



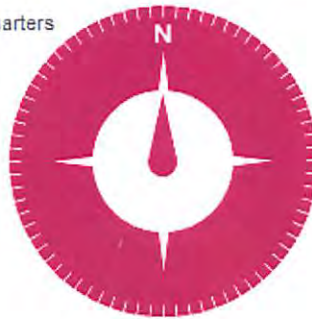
Introduction

R.M.S Lusitania and Safety of Life at Sea

Marine Safety Center
United States Coastguard Headquarters
Washington DC

Michael Kingston
Marine Trade & Energy DWF LLP
7 December 2015

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Go further

Good morning everyone. Thank you Captain Mauger for your kind introduction, and thank you all for coming.



By way of background, I am from Goleen, Co Cork in Ireland, where the Lusitania sank. Being a Marine Lawyer, and being from Co Cork I was asked to do a talk on the Lusitania by the Irish Cultural Centre in Hammersmith London, where I work, who in conjunction with St Mary's University run a Centennial Lecture Series. That was on the Anniversary in May. I then repeated it in Skibbereen in Co Cork in July, and just two weeks ago I was the guest speaker at the presentation of a piece of the hull by the youth of Kinsale in Co Cork to their new Old Head of Kinsale Signal Station Museum. That was an honour for me and at that event the incredible youth of Kinsale launched a 2016 Calendar of illustrations by the children in the community of the Lusitania. Here is one of those Calendars.



I cannot even begin to explain what an honour, as an Irishman, it is to be asked here to the Capital of the United States of America, and to the Head Quarters of the incredible United States Coastguard to be delivering a talk to you on the sinking of the Lusitania and safety of life at sea.

I would like to sincerely thank Captain Mauger and your colleagues for all their hard work and kindness in helping to organise this talk.

I am aware of the enormous repercussions that this tragic story had on the direction of the history of your great country, and to be asked to do this talk really is an incredible privilege.

I grew up in the era in Ireland when we still had pictures of John F Kennedy beside Pope John Paul, Our Lady, with a Sacred Heart light beside them, in no particular order! We all were aware and in touch with our cousins who had emigrated to the United States and who we thought of in our hearts on a constant basis.

I cannot over emphasise the warmth with which our community in Co Cork & Ireland holds your country. We have been intrinsically linked over the centuries, and for me to think that one day I would cross the sea between us and speak here was but a distant and crazy dream. That is what being here means to me. That is what you as a people mean to my community in Ireland. I am also honoured that one of my friends and neighbours from Co Cork, Patricia Sheehan is here with me, who I have no doubt feels the same as I do, and Patricia now lives here in Washington D.C. Patricia is here because two of her relations sadly died in the Lusitania Tragedy.

Of course the event that we are here to talk about was an enormous maritime tragedy that happened just over one hundred years ago off my county of Cork in Ireland. And Patricia's presence here particularly reminds us that this was above all a human tragedy on a colossal scale, with the loss of 1,201 lives. Above everything else that we speak about today, we think first and foremost about those people, and their families who Patricia represents here today.

One thing that I know about the United States Coastguard is that you have had to deal with tragedy and you have on so many occasions had to act with what can only be described as utter bravery. When I did this talk in my home town of Skibbereen in the summer it was in aid of our Local Hospital, and in thinking of tragedy and what our hospitals and services do I said to the audience, almost 400 people:

Before I start this talk I would like us all to think down through the annals of our lives and remember those family members, friends, or even total strangers, who helped us when we were on our knees, when we were injured or ill, or experienced tragedy. I know for a fact that there are some of you at this talk, who did small things that picked us up in the hardest moments, whose footsteps are the only ones to be found in those moments of our lives when we could not walk, and had to be carried, helping to put us back on our feet and guiding us to turn our energy into positivity. And we remember tonight the importance of collective

community spirit when tragedy strikes, of whatever nature. I have and I know we as a community have, very much in our thoughts tonight the victims of the freak accident that occurred 4 weeks ago this evening just down the road in Baltimore. Tonight we remember the importance of community, how we can make a difference together, the importance of celebrating together when great things happen, but also in joining together to support each other and those in need in times of sadness.

With that in mind, tonight, this talk, is dedicated to all those who have lost their lives in tragic circumstances as sea, and otherwise, or who have been injured, and their families, particularly of course the victims of the Lusitania and their families who are here, but also the victims of the Whiddy Island disaster, and the memory of Niamh O Connor, Barry Ryan-Davis Junior and Senior and their families.

The three people that I mention were the victims of a tragic drowning accident.

I tell this story today because when I was talking about total strangers I was referring to the safety services – the Angels of the Sea, the miracles on the Horizon, that appear and help and save lives – the United States Coastguard – and your comrades around the World.

400 people turned up in Co Cork, not least because of their respect for the enormity of the tragedy, but a respect too for the citizens of the United States, 128 of whom perished. Patricia's relation, Margaret Coughlan was a United States Citizen. Accordingly we think especially today of the US citizens and this talk is dedicated to them, but also to all Irish men and women who have lost their lives serving in the United States Coastguard and forces, and also the young Irish Students of the terrible Berkeley Balcony collapse in June, some of whom went to my University, University College Dublin, and I thank the Community of Berkeley and the United States for their support and the doctors and nurses who have been helping the survivors and their families here in the United States.

In recognition and respect for the *Lusitania's* US victims and our longstanding friendship with the United States it has been my honour to be asked by Youth of Riverstick Foróige Group and Kinsale Community School, on behalf of the Community of Co Cork to present a copy of the wonderful 2016 Calendar that they made, to Captain Mauger and the United States Coastguard which I will do after the talk.

In the first part of the talk – about 55 minutes. I will give an insight into the factual circumstances of the disaster in the context of the time. We will then take a break and I will then turn to the lessons that we can learn from it still today.

Part One

Coast of County Cork



The Lusitania tragedy was a very Irish story, not just the bigger story of a jig saw piece in the Great War of 1914 – 1918; for a number of reasons:

The ship sank off the coast of County Cork, just 12 miles South-West of Kinsale; all rescue efforts were raised from the harbours along Co Cork's coast, whose inhabitants who had to deal with the immediate aftermath of the tragedy – which traumatised the local population at the time, and it is in those villages where so many of the victims are buried.

The communication systems involved in the mystery of the ships discussion with the Admiralty in London were first commercialised and tested only a few years earlier in West Cork at Brow Head –and central to communications at the time -was the Vice Admiral of the British Navy, Vice Admiral Coke who was based in Queenstown (now Cobh)- Many of you will have been there. For the purpose of this lecture I will refer to Queenstown.

Irish engineers were involved in the construction of the Lusitania;

The ship wreck is in Irish waters and access is governed by Irish legislation;

The usual Captain of the *Lusitania*, Captain Dow, was born in Ballinaspittle, a small village located only a few miles from where the vessel sank.

Something that is not popularly known, submarines were commercialised by an Irish man. That of course is more known here in the US than anywhere as it was the US Navy that would first adopt the modern submarine named after that Irish Man, the USS Holland. And

most importantly tonight, there were Irish victims, including people from my home parish of Goleen, John Coughlan and his daughter, Margaret, and I am delighted that their descendant, Patricia Sheehan is here with us today.

Parish of Goleen (formerly Kilmoë) – West Cork



I was born and brought up in Crookhaven harbour in the Parish of Goleen attending our local National Schools of Goleen and Lisagriffin, the remotest schools in Co Cork, 50 miles West of Kinsale and that part of Ireland is the first part that you encounter when travelling from the United States. Lisagriffin School overlooks the famous Barleycove Bay, the same school that Patricia's family attended over the years which sits below the hill of Kilmoë Cemetery where her cousin Margaret Coughlan is buried.

I heard stories in those days about the *Lusitania*, about how the explosion could be heard in Goleen Parish, '*shaking the walls of the School*'. Of course, whilst that is no doubt an exaggeration, it does however make the point that the tragedy had a huge impact on the people of Co Cork at the time.

Following school in Goleen, where I learnt some Irish history, I went on to an International Benedictine School in Somerset, Downside School, in England closely connected with Ireland, where I studied and thoroughly enjoyed history.

Thereafter I went to University College Dublin where I studied history and politics, particularly Irish Ancient and Medieval History, and Ireland since the Great Famine in the mid 1800's when so many of my compatriots emigrated to the United States and Canada including many of my own relations.

After University College Dublin, I completed legal training in London, and became a marine lawyer working closely with Lloyd's of London, most recently assisting as legal advisor to their reports looking into the Deepwater Horizon Disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, the Costa Concordia Disaster, and their Arctic Regions report.

In that work we have been promoting best practice in shipping operations with the Governments of the Polar Regions and others, including the United States. At present I am working as the representative of the International Union of Marine Insurance on the world delegation Correspondence group of the International Maritime Organisation, finalising the Polar Code for shipping operations in the Arctic and Antarctic – with the U S Coastguard. This work includes significant amendment to the Safety of Life at Sea convention, first agreed in 1914 after the Titanic sank in 1912, but, importantly not yet ratified, before the *Lusitania* sank, which is a key issue in the death toll.

In this talk it is my aim to explain the tragedy in the context of the time, in the midst of the tactics being employed in the Great War. I will look at how the *Lusitania* sank, and add some local information from the Parish of Goleen.

I will of course look at the popular narrative that the German U-boat brutally sank an innocent passenger ship, which resulted in the US being brought into the war, and the suggestion that it was done deliberately with that aim in mind at the instigation of the British Admiralty in wilfully letting the great ship travel through clear danger.

But in thinking of those who died, I would like to focus above all today on the real failing – the failure of the rule of law on a number of fronts which I will turn to after the break. There are some aspects of the tragedy where we can still learn serious lessons in today's maritime industry, and in the parameters of war, to work to reduce these awful human consequences, which are occurring in other wars as we sit here today, and in the middle of the Mediterranean where the fundamental law that should be abided by all sea farers and the guardians of their nations, the duty to rescue, has been flouted, but I am pleased to say that a lot of goodness has evolved on that front since I first gave this talk in Hammersmith.

In particular, I will refer to:

A: The rules of engagement in war

B: Safety of Life at Sea Regulation – and some of its short comings; and

C: The legal and moral duty to rescue a stricken ship.

SS Great Britain

Picture © Carlisle - via Wikimedia
 SS Great Britain - via Wikimedia

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There had been a burst of activity in the 19th Century and Cork was at its centre.

When Isambard Kingdom Brunel was put in charge of the Great Western Railway between London and Bristol he decided that he would extend the new high speed link to the west and it was the birth of the trans-Atlantic Steam shipping era. In 1838 he built the SS Great Britain which was an oak hulled paddle wheel steamship. The ship crossed the Atlantic in 13 days and 7 hours. Not long before it took 30 days. The train could make it to Bristol in 4 hours as opposed to 14 hours by coach.

Picture of Crookhaven looking Southwest

Picture © Carlisle - via Wikimedia
 SS Great Britain - via Wikimedia

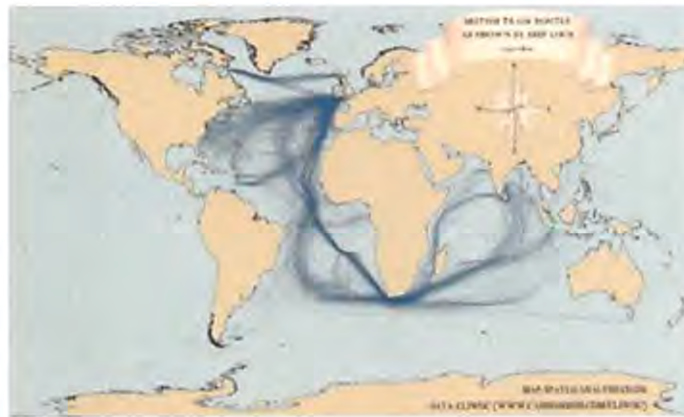
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Before wireless communication, the Cork Ports were some of the most important ports for the British Empire.

In my home of Crookhaven, like Queenstown, there were hotels and a Lloyds of London Agency Office. Runner boats in those times would carry supplies to passing ships if they did not enter the harbour, so plentiful that one could at one stage in Crookhaven walk across the harbour from boat to boat, as told to me by my Grandfather, Timothy Sheehan who was born in 1890 on a number of occasions. I did not believe him at the time, because in my day - growing up in 70's and 80's Ireland everything had become redundant and derelict, apart from a small fishing industry, as our economy stagnated, and I did not understand how wireless communication had utterly transformed the shipping routes only 70 years earlier.

British Trade Routes



It is important in telling the story of the *Lusitania* that I put in context Ireland's importance in transatlantic shipping. These great liners stopped regularly at Queenstown.

Prior to land to ship communication Cork was a critical port of call for the West Indian and Jamaican fleets for three very different but nonetheless very important reasons that collectively packed boats into the harbours of Co Cork making them a hive of activity.

First the boats required provisions for their trip creating lucrative prices and a healthy local trade. Secondly, natural shelter provided safety to vessels waiting for favourable weather conditions before heading west, or to run out of unfavourable weather on the East bound leg of the journey.

But above all else, and in particular my home of Crookhaven, they were critical as a communication hub for this international trade between the old and the new world. Lloyd's offices would send instructions to Masters as to where they should deliver their cargo, and the Master would report any issues or loss during the voyage.

Queenstown (Cobh)



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Of course the great liners carried much cargo and their main port of call in Ireland was Queenstown, where usually they would pick up passengers – which is where, only 3 years and 3 weeks earlier in 1912, the Titanic made her last stop. Nearly all the main liner operators of the time had an office in Queenstown.

Soon after the Great Britain's first crossing the underwater 'screw prop propeller' was introduced. In fact she was converted from a paddle wheel to screw prop. It made an enormous difference. Then the turbine engine was introduced. Engineering was breaking new boundaries at a staggering rate. By the turn of the century the trans-Atlantic crossing could incredibly be made in under six days.

The Rivalry of nations meant that the liner was the new symbol of prowess. The fastest vessel would be holder of the unofficial 'Blue Riband' which was not only the line operator, but the nation's flag of honour.

Kaiser Wilhelm II



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Britain was in control at the end of the 19th Century. The German Monarchy was not happy about their place in the world. Britain, Belgium, France and the Netherlands had stolen a march on Germany in the Imperial stakes. The importance of family rivalry should not be underestimated. Kaiser Wilhelm, was the Grandson of Queen Victoria and nephew of the Prince of Wales (Edward VII). He started a ship building programme both in liners and dangerously, naval power.

Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse



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In 1897, during Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee, as a nice little present for his grandmother, the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* took the Blue Riband. For the next 9 years the Germans held the Blue Riband.

Roger Bannister – Four Minute Mile



But then, the greatest ships of the era were built by Cunard, the *Lusitania* and the *Mauretania*. What the *Lusitania* achieved, not just in winning the Blue Riband back from Germany, but the manner in which it was done, was the equivalent in the marine world to Roger Bannister breaking the four minute mile. No liner had gone near the 5 day crossing since the six day record was broken in 1889.

Lusitania Takes the Blue Riband October 1907

- Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse 1898 30 March – 3 April 22.29 knots (41.28)
- Deutschland 1900 26 August – 1 September 23.02 knots (42.63 km/h)
- Deutschland 1901 26 July – 1 August 23.06 knots (42.71 km/h)
- Kronprinz Wilhelm 1902 10 – 16 September 23.09 knots (42.76 km/h)
- Deutschland 1903 2 – 8 September 23.15 knots (42.87 km/h)
- **Lusitania 1907 6 – 10 October 23.99 knots (44.43 km/h)**
- Lusitania 1908 17 May–21 May 24.83 knots (45.99 km/h)
- Lusitania 1908 5 – 10 July (46.32 km/h)
- Lusitania 1909 8 – 12 August 25.65 knots (47.50 km/h)
- Mauretania 1909 26 – 30 September 26.06 knots (48.26 km/h)

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The *Lusitania* smashed the record and achieved a time of 4 days, 19 hours and 52 minutes in October 1907. The *Lusitania* and her sister ship *Mauretania* were the champions of the sea going into the First World War.

And the start for the majority of Blue Riband records is Queenstown, and every *Lusitania* and *Mauretania* record started in County Cork.

Greyhound of the Seas

Source: Lusitania, the ship that was
built at Brown's Yard on the Clyde

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In Liverpool 200,000 people lined the docks to see Lucy as she was known off on her maiden voyage. A similar number lined Cork Harbour and the coast of Co Cork, the ship clearly visible all the way along Corks Coast until she passed the Fastnet Lighthouse, known as the Tear Drop of Ireland as it is the last point Irish emigrants would see of their home land. Thousands greeted her on her arrival at Pier 54 in New York. The local population in Co Cork would hang on every minute of the crossing until word came back as to whether the record had been broken. There was therefore a huge and affectionate connection between Cork's population and this magnificent ship, and in May 1915 the sadness of the Titanic still resonated deeply in Queenstown.

The Lusitania also represented hope for Irish people which I will return to as a safe passage to a new life for emigrants. This of course also rang true for all United State citizens as these ships were their connection with the rest of the world and their families. It was inconceivable that she could be deliberately destroyed with a nearly full complement of passengers.

Lusitania built at Brown's Yard on the Clyde

Source: Lusitania, the ship that was
built at Brown's Yard on the Clyde

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She was built in Scotland in Brown's yard on the Clyde, the *Mauretania* at Swan Hunter's on Tyneside, both ships fully subsidised by the British Government. Much has been made of that, but it was not unusual and similar practice occurred in Germany. The Admiralty's stipulations were that the ship had to put her machinery below the waterline, and had to be available for naval service upon demand. Fittings were to be made in construction for attaching guns, and a speed of 25 knots had to be achieved. (15:00)

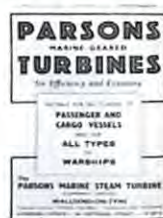
The Grand Rooms of the *Lusitania* –
Adam, Chippendale & Sheraton



The architect, Leonard Peskett was requested to adhere to the Admiralties conditions and meet Cunard's desire to provide passengers with the comforts expected of the time. This required the vessels decks to be raised giving her a sleek and slim appearance

She was thus known from this appearance as the Grey Hound of the Seas. No ship or any creation like her had ever been seen before. She represented the enhancement of our capability as people.

Charles Parson – Marine Steam Turbine Company



And Irish pride was well placed. Not only was she to break the 5 day crossing, but she was powered by turbine engines made by the Marine Steam Turbine Company, owned by Irishman Charles Parson. The very foundation of her achievement was his great turbine engine invention.

A large passenger ship is shown in a steep, vertical position, having capsized in the ocean. A massive, dark plume of smoke or steam billows from the upper part of the ship's hull. The ship's white upper sections and dark lower hull are visible. The surrounding water is a deep blue-green, and the sky is a pale, hazy blue. The ship's masts and rigging are visible, extending from its tilted structure.

Lusitania Sunk by two Torpedoes



It was, as can be seen from the headlines in the New York Times, and all the other papers, believed at the time that the U-Boat had brutally and cold heartedly struck an innocent passenger vessel without warning, contrary to international regulation, and had then struck her with a second torpedo for good measure, denying the passengers any chance of evacuating the ship, causing the loss of so many innocent lives, including 128 of the 139 citizens of a neutral country, the US.

Tragedy used to maximise pressure on US to join War



United States National Archives
2017-07-21 10:00:00



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The picture that the British and her allies would wish to paint of Germany was that it was a unilateral breach of International law, and it was used to stir opinion here in the US and to get the US to join the War effort in 1917. There is no doubt about that. It is a misrepresentation to say that the tragedy brought the US directly into the war because that implies that the US was immediately swayed to take up arms. The US did not join until 1917. But it is not incorrect to say it played an important role in turning US opinion heavily against Germany and in 1917 the Lusitania was still being used in the Propaganda machine.

Whilst it is true is that the Lusitania was undoubtedly fired upon, which was definitively a breach of the rules of engagement in international law, there was no second torpedo. It is also clear that the consequence of the torpedo strike was not intended to be as catastrophic as it was. Whilst this is no excuse, and other factors, including the unusually slow speed that day of the great ship, the weather, the cargo she was carrying, and sheer bad luck, all combined to produce the result that we now are talking about, it is a lesson for us still today in making decisions to attack in warfare.

All the many eyewitness accounts of the tragedy confirm that there was one torpedo which struck the ship on the starboard side near the bow of the ship, shortly after which there was a second explosion. The exact cause of the secondary explosion is still a matter of debate. However some incredible diving work and experiments have shown that possibly, a large quantity of Aluminium powder the ship was carrying became highly explosive upon contact with water, and could have blown the hull out of the bow of the ship. She sank in only 18 minutes.

Winston Churchill – Conspiracy within the Admiralty ?



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There have also been conspiracy theories over the years that the Admiralty actually hoped for such an outcome and deliberately misled the Captain and wilfully failed to protect the ship in order to entice the US to join the Allies in the War effort. Whatever about deliberate conspiracy to sink the flag bearer of the British Empire with the loss of 1200 lives, which I find hard to believe could have been the case, and would require such a combination of perfect errors to coincide, and the loss of vital supplies that the ship was carrying, including unprimed ammunition for the war effort, the picture painted about the unilateral breach of the rules of engagement by the Germans is not quite as clear cut as that, and when the picture is fully understood, there is without doubt culpability both on the part of Cunard and the Admiralty in their duty of care to the Passengers.

The Mersey Report was a Cover up as no mention could be made of Admiralty instructions to Merchants ships regarding what they were to do to counter the U –boat submarine crisis, such instructions being a deliberate breach of International law. And no mention was allowed of actual communication between the Admiralty and Captain Turner as the Lusitania approached Co. Cork.

It is the case that following extensive research at Admiralty House that the communications with the *Lusitania* have been removed deliberately. Additionally no mention could be made of what the Admiralty knew about the movements of German U boats. The Admiralty had broken the German Codes and intercepted key information which could not be disclosed at the Hearing for national security reasons.

In order to try and understand the sinking of the Lusitania it is very important to explain the status of the war and to put cruise liners and their role in the Great War in context.

Map of World War I - May 1915



Kaiser Wilhelm II's increase of German Naval power was reciprocated by Britain to maintain the balance of power. The rivalry for the Blue Riband was symptomatic of this military escalation.

When Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated, entangled international alliances formed over the previous decades were invoked. Within weeks, the major powers were at war and the conflict soon spread around Europe.

Germany invaded neutral Belgium and Luxembourg before moving towards France, leading Britain to declare war on Germany in order to honour Britain's Treaty with Belgium. (22:00)

World War One – slaughter on an unimaginable scale



The first world war was like no other in history, and was a consequence of shifting alliance and the balance of power between a small number of elite royalty, which caused such

devastation on an unimaginable scale - the consequence of 'unbridled Nationalism' that can be so destructive.

Armies were enormous, and new methods of attack were introduced on a large scale. Aircraft and Submarines were introduced and they became central to the war. What was critically important were supplies and avenues of access to support the war effort, or undermine the enemy's.

It was critical for Britain to control her seas, but also to block access to Germany through the North Sea, the English Channel and the Mediterranean. Britain's very first act of War in August 1914 was to blockade all these areas by the Navy. In November 1914 Britain declared the whole of the North Sea a war zone.

Britain maintained her blockade by laying extensive minefields in the English Channel and the North Sea. Incoming merchant vessels were compelled to divert to English ports for inspection and faced confiscation if carrying contraband. If *bona fide* they could proceed – under Royal Navy Escort through the minefield. This in fact infuriated the United States at the time as they were a neutral and could trade with whoever they wanted.

Germany, in retaliation was attempting to blockade Britain but of course their task was much more difficult, as they had to do it to the West of Britain in the Atlantic and in the South Irish Sea.

The advance of the Submarine- U-Boat(Unterseeboot)



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The submarine's impact on the First World War is staggering. Eleven million tonnes of Allied shipping was sunk, and only, and I say only given the scale of the War, at the loss of 178 U boats, and 5,300 crew. With the use of the U-boat Germany, later in the war, came to the brink of victory in a desperate 1917 for the allies, before the US joined the war effort,

Germany having taken up her 'shoot first ask questions later' U-boat tactics once more, which they were forced to stop after the *Lusitania* sinking by President Wilson. Everything happens in circles sometimes. If the *Lusitania* had not been sunk, would they have won the war? Was it a self-inflicted and fatal wound on their war effort? If logic is to prevail then it would seem so. But when talking about the *Lusitania*, logic is not the word that springs immediately to mind.

Shortly before the War the submarine was considered by both Germany and Britain as an unreliable second class citizen in the naval world.

John Philip Holland – Born February 29, 1840, Liscannor, Co Clare
Died 2 August, 1914, New Jersey, U.S



It was Irishman John Holland from County Clare who spent years in the 1800's creating a prototype submarine which was adopted by the American Navy and after whom the USS Holland is named. When I did this talk in my home town of Skibbereen in County Cork in the summer some of his relations were present.

Most Navies remained sceptical about the use of the submarine.

And at the beginning of the war German only had several small U boats.

U-Boat Commander Otto Weddigen
22 September 1914 – sinks *Cressy*, *Hogue*, and *Aboukir*



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Journal of Internal Medicine 255: 105–112

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But when, on 22nd September 1914, Otto Weddigen sank three British naval warships off the Dutch coast with the loss of 1,500 servicemen, this all changed. Please note that many victims were Irish. He was personally decorated by the Kaiser with the Iron Cross. It sent the British Admiralty into shock, and on 15 October he was at it again, off Aberdeen with the loss of 500 servicemen. War had reached new depths of merciless killing.

Germany was responding to the British Blockade and their new weapon was stalking the British naval fleet. In response to the British blockade Germany imposed a counter-blockade, declaring all waters around the British Isles to be a war zone, including the Cork Coast. Dangerously it became the norm for hundreds of seafarers to drown. The lines of morality had been re-drawn, and in those circumstances, this was a recipe for further moral barriers to be broken.

The Western Approaches



Figure 1. Comparison of the two scenarios.

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Germany had about 30 U Boats in 1914, with about 10 operational at any one time, with a concentration on the South Western approaches where ships supplying the United Kingdom were heading to Queenstown, Mifordhaven or Liverpool. The area was known as Torpedo Alley.

To counter this the British deployed mines in the English Channel to force the Germans back. They did not think it was possible for the U-boat to travel the extra 1,400 miles around Scotland and down to the Fastnet. In fact when further destruction took place in 1915 Rear Admiral Horace Hood was demoted by the Admiralty from Commander of Dover forces in the Channel. He was deemed to have failed to keep back German submarines from entering the Irish Sea. However it was soon realised the U-boat was managing easily to take the circuitous route.

[In fact, the Germans deployed the machine during the war to Gallipoli in the Mediterranean and, as far as the US and, in more difficult climes, such as the Barents Seat, to attack Arctic merchant traffic supplying Russian.

By 1917, allied shipping was being brought to its knees and the Admiralty were forced to operate a joint merchant and Naval convoy system.]

Before the depth charge was developed it was impossible to track submarines, except in circumstances where Germany sent communications and they were intercepted. These were desperate times for the allies.

Propaganda in Ireland



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So in their attempt to strangle the British war effort, the *Lusitania* entered the war zone and met her fate. The sinking sent shock waves throughout the British Empire, and as much as it did not sit well with many Irishmen that included Ireland at the time.

Propaganda is a powerful tool. We know all too well in recent times about the requirement for tacit moral justice –particularly the confirmed position that Saddam Hussain was developing Weapons of Mass destruction acting as the moral licence for Britain and the US to invade Iraq for a second time. And we know that that position was wrong. I do not suggest that such a position was deliberately and falsely put forward to create the licence to go to war. I will leave you to draw your own conclusions from the evidence, but I simply highlight the need to justify action. If the greatest liner the Empire has ever seen, that is innocently carrying non contraband goods and thousands of Civilian Passengers is callously blown out of the water contrary to international regulation then such a situation has its advantages. It was a perfect story to assist in recruitment and to paint the enemy as an evil perpetrator who had killed neutral passengers also – 128 US Citizens.

As you can see from this poster, the Lusitania was utilised heavily to recruit from an enraged population including Ireland of course.

Gallipoli Commemoration – President Michael D Higgins



Photo: D. Gifford / The Irish Times
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Recruitment was a huge and pivotal issue in the Great War. And here I must explain the Ireland of 100 years ago. We often fail to explain the huge involvement and support of the majority of Irish people in the world wars.

I mentioned the loss of Irish men on the torpedoed warships. It is important to explain Ireland's support for the ally's war effort at this time 100 years ago. Approximately 167,000 of the 180,000 Irish Volunteers went to fight for Britain. Home Rule for Ireland had been passed in Parliament but not introduced as the war intervened. The Reform Act of 1911 meant that finally it could no longer be vetoed by the House of Lords who kept blocking it because of their landed Estates in Ireland. The Irish Parliamentary Party had a large number of seats at Westminster. There was great support for the war effort. There were republican under currents, which ultimately came to the fore in the Easter Rising of 1916, which you will hear a lot about next year, but when the *Lusitania* sank the majority of Ireland believed in the

doctrine of the famous Irish Parliamentary Party politician, Daniel O Connell that *'the Altar of Liberty totters when cemented only in blood'*. It is fitting therefore that President Michael D Higgins went to Gallipoli at the beginning of May and that Irish Ambassador Muhall laid a wreath at the Cenotaph last November and this November, an act that is long overdue given the sacrifice so many Irishmen made in both World Wars, most of them Nationalists who died with honour.

On 7th May 1915 what those who had enlisted were going through was suddenly brought very much home to Ireland. There was outrage in Ireland and anti-German riots by the Irish in Liverpool, known as the Lusitania riots. In Cork all German businesses were boycotted. There were riots in South Africa, Canada, as well as German businesses boycotted here in the US and elsewhere.

Funeral Cortège- Queenstown – 2 miles long



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I will not go into great detail today about bodies and struggles for life and sadness of loss and desperate searches for loved ones. You can take it for granted that that happened, and was well documented in all the media following all the commemorations in Queenstown, Kinsale, and Courtmacsherry over the anniversary period in May. What I simply want to convey is that this disaster involved 2,000 people, many women and children, ladies with young babies. Bodies came ashore all along the coast of Co. Cork. Hundreds, including **Patricia's Great Uncle**, John Coughlan, were never found. The County was stricken with grief and revulsion that such a thing could happen. The funeral procession seen here in Queenstown stretched for over two miles.

Upturned Life Boat Found near Crookhaven at Long Island – Lifeboat 'Lusitania 22A Liverpool'



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The papers were littered with unbelievably sad stories. Just outside Schull, up the road from my home, near Long Island, as you can see here two local Fishermen, James Driscoll and John Regan found an upturned lifeboat painted "22A Lusitania Liverpool", with 6 bodies inside, one lady with a baby clasped to her by a life belt.

More Propaganda - Women and their babies drown



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Accordingly, in the mind-set of the War effort, all the tragedy, all the suffering, this presented an enormous opportunity.

Winston Churchill wrote in 1937

'in spite of all its horror, we must regard the sinking of the Lusitania as an event most important and favourable to the Allies.....the poor babies who perished in the ocean struck a blow to German power more deadly than could have been achieved by the sacrifice of a hundred thousand fighting men'

Medals issued in Germany / Allies issued fakes to exaggerate German celebrations



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Germany did issue some medals, but thousands of fakes were manufactured by the allies to spread news of the German celebrations of killing innocent women and children.

The Mersey Report



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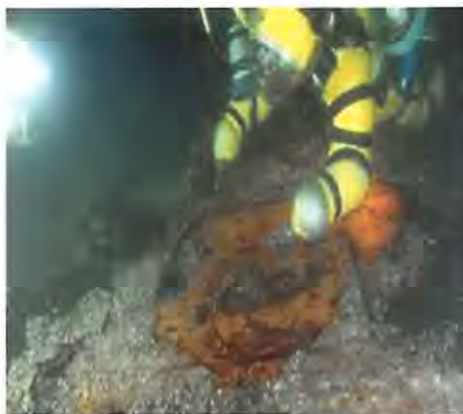
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Of course- the truth of the sinking was very different to the story underpinning the Propaganda.

The Report found that Germany had breached International Law. Cunard and the Admiralty were exonerated. We all know that even in peace time from investigations that it is very difficult to establish the truth in any enquiry. That was never going to happen in relation to the sinking of the *Lusitania*, as key evidence hinged on communication between the Admiralty and Captain Turner, the disclosure of which would compromise British War tactics, and the knowledge of the Admiralty. It would also confirm that the Admiralty were themselves operating contrary to International Law, quite deliberately and on a large scale. It would also have shown that both the Cunard Line and the Admiralty were totally negligent in their Duty of Care to the *Lusitania*'s passengers as there was not just a possibility, given what the Admiralty knew, but a distinct probability that she would be fired upon by U -20, and that Cunard showed casual disregard for her passengers knowing what cargo was on board.

Lusitania – ready for armed action – but not requisitioned



Much has been made of the fact that the *Lusitania* was built to cater for her use as a naval vessel, and that she was paid for by the Admiralty. However that is a smoke screen to the real issues. It was not in any way unusual for Britain or Germany to have liners assist in war. In fact the naval architects catered for such an eventuality on every ship. Here you can see one of the Gun plates in the event guns were to be attached. As this audience knows only too well, the Merchant Navy in wartime are called upon to transport troops & supplies, and act as auxiliary warships. This is still the case today.

During the Boer War Cunard had provided six ships and Samuel Cunard was knighted.

At the outbreak of the War the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse* was requisitioned by the German Navy. She eventually met her fate when she was sunk by *HMS Highflyer* whilst loading coal in August 1914 when in true German fashion she refused to surrender upon request.

In 1903 Cunard had signed an agreement with the Government that her entire fleet could be requisitioned.

Very importantly from a matter of international law, on the eve of the Great War the *Lusitania* and *Mauretania* were recalled for conversion to battleships, but both were rejected on the basis of their huge coal consumption. They were put back into Trans-Atlantic liner service.

Rules of Engagement – International Law – Paris Declaration 1856 / The Cruiser / Prize Rules



- Cannot attack on sight
- Stop & Search permitted and obligatory before further action
- If truly neutral ship must be allowed to continue her voyage, even if contraband discovered which is to be impounded
- If hostile ship can be seized as prize or if far from land destroyed
- **Whatever the case proper provision must be made for the safety of passengers and crew.**



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The Declaration of Paris 1856 represented the first multilateral attempt to codify, in times of peace, rules which were to be applicable in the event of war.

They encapsulate the Cruiser- Prize Rules which stated that an unarmed merchant ship could not be attacked on sight. She must be stopped and searched to establish her identity and true nature of her cargo. If neutral, she must be allowed to continue on her way after any contraband had been impounded. If hostile, the ship and her cargo could be seized as prizes or if far from land, destroyed. Whatever the case proper provision had to be made for the safety of her passengers and crew.

There is absolutely no doubt that in firing on the *Lusitania* the Germans were in violation of International Law.

And importantly the whole purpose of the rules was to ensure the safety of Civilian Crew.

German War Zone – February 1915 – including Western Approaches



But like everything, the position is not so straight forward, and the Mersey report deliberately fails to reflect other indiscretions. On 04 February Germany announced an unrestricted campaign of submarine warfare and on 18th February declared all coastal waters around the UK a war zone. In doing so they were attempting to justify a counter –blockade to the British blockade of the North Sea. However that did not give them the right to abandon their obligations under the Cruiser Rules which is what they were doing.

And in any event the blockade itself was illegal under international law, as was the British Blockade because it was agreed in the Declaration of Paris that the highways of the seas belonged to all nations and there should be the right of free passage.

For the blockade to be legal it has to take place on the edge of the jurisdiction concerned only- not hundreds of miles away, thereby interfering with 'neutral' merchant ships.

But this was a war, a war that sprang, as discussed, new machinery such as the Aeroplane and submarines into the arena. Wars are there to be won or lost, and sometimes desperate measures have to be taken. In the Great War that included a departure from the rules of engagement.

The *Lusitania* disaster would be the direct result of the departure by both Germany and the Allies from fair play. This requires further explanation.

The Q Ship

- In this example hinged flaps aft of the anchor hide 3" guns



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Journal of Internal Medicine 255: 105–114

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In order to counter the submarine threat a new tactic was employed by Churchill – the mystery ship known as the Q ship.

named so because of the Q in Queenstown.

Such ships were basically fishing vessels and merchant ships requisitioned from their owners in early 1915 and refitted in Queenstown so that they would be unrecognisable, and then hidden guns were fitted, which could be activated at short notice. Trained naval crews were disguised as Civilian crew. Their purpose was- using the international rules – to lure German U Boats to the surface and then fire upon them.

They were additionally loaded with timber for buoyancy so that if the Germans under the rules allowed the crew to leave and fired to sink the ship she would remain afloat. The Germans would close in on her and the remaining crew who had not actually abandoned would open fire.

In addition to this, Churchill issued orders to fly false 'neutral flags', which the *Lusitania* did herself in January 1915 and additionally in February 1915 he ordered all merchant ships including the *Lusitania* to ram U Boats on sight. The Germans lost several U boats during the Q Ship strategy in early 1915. It was no longer safe to apply the rules of engagement by surfacing first and the neutral flag could no longer be trusted. So U boats were ordered to attack.

The collective behaviour of both Germany and Britain, created a complete recipe for disaster, and the only safeguard was moral strength. Unfortunately there was such a departure from that in such a short space of time it is incredible. For everyone, including humanity at that time it was basically a race to the bottom. As the Great Irishman Edmund burke said. *'All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing'*

Notices in American Newspapers



Reprinted from the New York Times, May 1, 1915.

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Walter Schweiger and his crew had it within their power to make a decision between right and wrong. In fact they had it on two occasions. I will return to the second later. Unfortunately they chose evil. That they may never have intended the full consequences, as Walter Schweiger alludes to in his diaries, it was however a possibility. The Cruiser rules were designed to prevent Civilian Casualty. That they were under instruction to escalate their work under shoot first orders there can be no doubt. That is why it is so incredibly important to have strong international rules about war because morality gets lost in translation in the middle of war. But Britain were also in clear breach of the Paris Declaration and there can be no doubt that the notice in the US Press by the Germans warning Passengers and the calculating behaviour of the Germans in a shoot first ask questions later policy was very real and in action in May 1915. To allow the *Lusitania* to pass though unassisted with so many civilians was grossly negligent.

It is hard to believe that only a few years earlier engagement by a submarine was deemed to be morally wrong but that had by now all changed.

Lusitania's Manifest – Munitions confirmed



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And to make that breach of duty of care worse she was undoubtedly carrying ammunition. None of this was mentioned in the Mersey Report.

Britain had a serious crisis in stock of munitions in 1915 and were way behind production levels in Germany. It was a crisis and in the spring of 1915 a Ministry for munitions was established.

The Lusitania's manifest confirms that she was in fact carrying 5,000 shells weighing over 50 tonnes, 4.2million Remington cartridges, 18 cases of percussion fuses, and 1,200 cubic feet of aluminium fine powder, as well as much non munition army supplies.

This position has not been accepted in the popular narrative and much speculation prevails. The initial story about the innocent and crippled Cruise liner brutally sunk by a second torpedo was utilised by the Allies and as we have seen was the story the World heard on 7th May 1915, as can be seen from the headline in the New York Times.

Eyewitness accounts however tell a very different story and confirm that there was one torpedo and then a secondary violent explosion.

Much investigation has ensued over the years to determine what exactly happened.

U.S Passenger Act 1882



- The Passenger Act 1882
- Section 8: Explosives; cattle
- It shall not be lawful to take, carry, or have on board of any such steamship or other vessel any nitro-glycerine, dynamite, or any other explosive article or compound, nor any vitriol or like acids, nor gunpowder, except for the ship's use, nor any article or number of articles, whether as a cargo or ballast, which, by reason of the nature or quantity or mode of storage thereof, shall, either singly or collectively, be likely to endanger the health or lives of the passengers or the safety of the vessel, and horses, cattle, or other animals taken on board of or brought in any such vessel shall not be carried on any deck below the deck on which passengers are berthed, nor in any compartment in which passengers are berthed, nor in any adjoining compartment except in a vessel built of iron, and of which the compartments are divided off by watertight bulkheads extending to the upper deck.
- For every violation of any of the provisions of this section the master of the vessel shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding one thousand dollars, and be imprisoned for a period not exceeding one year.
- The Preamble to the Act states:
- The provisions of this act shall apply to every steamship or other vessel whereon emigrant passengers, or passengers other than cabin passengers, are taken on board at a port or place in the United States for conveyance to any port or place in a foreign country except foreign territory contiguous to the United States.



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Highly important to this is a legal consideration too, and what did the U S authorities know of the ammunition. It was illegal here under US legislation to put any dangerous cargo on a passenger ship.

(44:00)

The passenger Act 1882 states that

[it shall not be lawful to take, carry, or have on board of any such steamship or other vessel any nitroglycerine, dynamite, or any other explosive article or compound, nor any vitriol or like acids, nor gunpowder, except for the ship's use, nor any article or number of articles, whether as a cargo or ballast, which by reason of the nature or quantity or mode of storage thereof, shall, either singly or collectively, be likely to endanger the health or lives of the passengers or the safety of the vessel]

If the cargo being carried was likely to endanger the passengers, ship and crew, it was an illegal act under US legislation. Cunard and the Admiralty would be culpable, and so would the US Government.



One Page Manifest actually submitted



Exhibit 1 - Lusitania Manifest

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But the full, supplementary Manifest declaring the munitions was not submitted until 05 May when the *Lusitania* was approaching Irish waters. Here is the actual one page manifest which, was signed under Declaration of Oath. It makes no mention of the munitions and was signed by Captain Dow – not Captain Turner. It was a sham. The liner was shipping munitions, and the US authorities were not enforcing the position properly because previous full manifests show the *Lusitania*, other Cunard vessels and White Star vessels were doing the same. Unfortunately it is also the case that the US Banks were lending huge amount of money to the Allies to purchase US ammunition.

The sunken *Lusitania* off Kinsale



Exhibit 2 - Lusitania Wreck

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The issue was never going to be settled until an actual inspection of her holds could reveal her secrets, and tests could be carried out to see if it was live and caused the second explosion, which is what the Germans alleged. I do not have time to go into the full details of the various dives to the *Lusitania* this morning, but I will say that the time it has taken to get to

the wreck has allowed the popular narrative and mystery surrounding it to subsist. It is also important to explain that this is still an issue for the owners as the Irish Government are prohibiting any further exploration – to the deep annoyance of the current owner of the Wreck, American, Greg Bemis.

The wreck was not located officially until 1935, but real attempts to access it did not happen until an ex US Navy diver, based in Kinsale, John Light dived between 1960 – 1962. Conditions were very difficult and no munitions were found.

Munitions Recovered - 1982



Photo: D. Carver, in the author's collection
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Finally in 1982 some of the cartridges and Brass Percussion fuses were found. Tests have shown that they were not live. However very interesting research by Paddy O Sullivan, from Bandon in Co Cork, who is a diver and also worked with John Light in the 1960's has shown that the aluminium powder,

[consisting of 1,190 cubic feet of space in 144 cases and 50 barrels weighing 46 tonnes]

located in the forward hold just where the torpedo hit, could have exploded and blown the forward hull out of the ship. Paddy's work is impressive and his excellent book if you do not have it is on sale here this evening. His tests show that if heated beyond 30 degrees and brought into contact with water, hydrogen gas is released, and alternatively if it distributes as a dust cloud, fire or a spark can cause a violent explosion – and are a catalyst for several more clouds and explosions, which he argues is consistent with the rumbling sounds some witnesses heard.

It is possible that such a scenario would only be possible if the cargo was impacted upon violently. In normal circumstances therefore the cargo was inert, and would have been 'safe'

in accordance with the Passenger Act. But this was a war situation and it should surely have been contemplated that such an eventuality was a possibility. To put Passengers in that situation was quite incorrect. But the *Lusitania* without passengers would arouse serious suspicion.

A conclusive result cannot be determined until the ship is inspected properly, and it is for this reason that the owners are arguing that the Irish authorities should allow this to happen.

Had any of this come to the fore it would have undermined the propaganda and confirmed the negligence of the Admiralty, and the culpability perhaps of the US authorities in turning a blind eye to the shipment of munitions.

There was no mention of the munitions in the Liverpool Report and in the US enquiry the word munition was replaced with 'Government Stores' and the reference to the aluminium powder was removed. Evidence as to the inert nature of the shells and fuses was given by an expert from the supplier, ironically named, Bethlehem Steel, which of course has been proven to be correct. But no mention or discussion arose about the aluminium powder.

The *Lusitania* must be viewed, not in isolation but in the context of the war effort at the time. The Allies were suffering terrible losses in the Gallipoli landings in the Eastern Mediterranean. They were suffering huge naval losses at the hands of the U boats. A further blunder of the magnitude of the *Lusitania* where the fault rested on the door of the Admiralty could have huge repercussions for those involved and for the British War effort. It was critical to cover up any mistakes, and the silver lining was the huge propaganda opportunity. Nothing could be allowed to undermine it. The Germans did attempt to counter the British propaganda at the time accusing them of carrying arms and using the passengers as Human Shields, which it seems is a probable position. Nonetheless that did not give the Germans a licence to break the Cruiser Rules, and certainly not where a passenger ship was concerned.

The Report also concluded that not only was there no ammunition but, despite evidence to the complete contrary, there were two torpedoes, and not just one U boat lying in wait but several, compounding German lawlessness and heartlessness.

Captain William Thomas Turner



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Which brings us to Captain Turner.

Whether a blunder therefore or a conspiracy – it would be a disaster for the War effort if the truth got out about the failure to protect the *Lusitania* and not adhere to warnings.

As a backstop to blame in any event the intention was to make Captain Turner the scapegoat. He had no choice but to comply.

Lord Mersey, who had overseen the *Titanic* enquiry, was in charge of the Inquiry. He had also overseen the *Empress of Ireland* enquiry, which sank on the foggy night of May 29, 1914, on its 96th transatlantic crossing, when it collided with the SS Storstad on the St. Lawrence River. The *Empress* sank in just 14 minutes. A total of 1,012 people aboard perished, making it the greatest maritime disaster in Canadian history.

Much of the witness evidence was vetted by the Admiralty and Captain Turner was not allowed to discuss his orders. Only five days before the hearings commenced a statute was enacted in parliament making it a treasonable offence for a British subject to divulge information concerning the carriage of munitions or placement of guns on any ship of Britain or her Empire.

Admiral Fisher, the First Sea Lord wrote on 7th May 'I hope Captain Turner will be arrested immediately after the enquiry, whatever the verdict'

On 14th May Churchill wrote that he hoped Turner would be 'pursued without check'

The Admiralty wrote to Lord Mersey stating 'The Government would consider it politically expedient if the captain of the *Lusitania* were promiscuously blamed for the accident'

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Captain Turner was accused of not adopting an order to Zig – Zag, although this was not extended for use to the Merchant Fleet until after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Additionally he was accused of disobeying an order to avoid usual trade routes, and to make port at dawn, and have all lifeboats swung out, but removing the orders in the same message to ram submarines on sight – which would have undeniably confirmed that Britain was also in breach of international law and therefore retaliatory breach by the Germans was a distinct possibility. Coupled with the ammunition and the escalated 'fire first' policy of the U Boats this had actually become a probability.

Mizen Head



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It is my opinion that Captain Turner applied extreme caution on the morning of 7th May 1915, with the safety of the life of his passengers and crew foremost in his mind.

This is a picture of the jaws of Mizen Head. As we know the Cork coast between Mizen Head and Cape Clear Island and around the coast to Kinsale is littered with ship wrecks and has taken thousands of lives over the years. The biggest killer of all is fog. Indeed Captain Turner himself had appeared as an expert Witness only a few days before the *Lusitania* left New York in the enquiry into the *Empress of Ireland* Disaster which was caused by fog.

Fastnet Lighthouse



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It is because of fog that the Fastnet Lighthouse was built, the Lighthouse on Cape Clear being too high up luring Masters to mistake Mizen for the Old Head of Kinsale, turning their ships into Roaring Water Bay and the Carberry Islands, and in fact the modern stone built Lighthouse was finished in 1904 just a few years before the *Lusitania* crossed to regain the Blue Riband. On that morning there was thick fog and Captain Turner quite sensibly slowed the vessel down until he was sure of his bearings. This factor must be taken into consideration in the last hours of the *Lusitania*. He also had an inexperienced crew and one boiler was stood down due to rationing by Cunard.

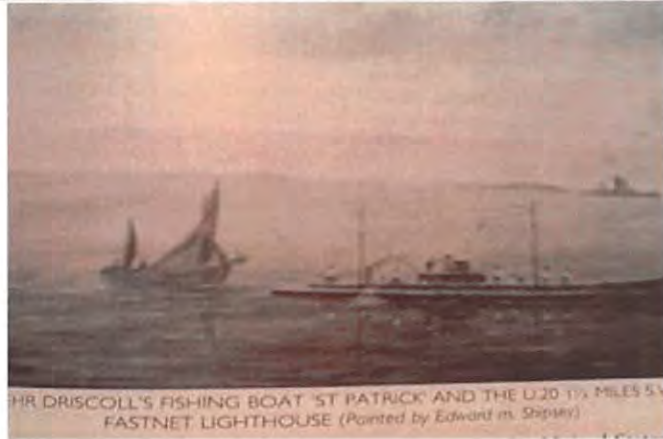
If he did not slow down he risked ending up here, and if his head was not on the block for a German attack, it certainly would be if his ship ended up under these cliffs. He had to slow down until he was sure of his bearings and it seems the fog caused some confusion. Of course it would take some time before the firemen could stoke up speed again.

Turning now to the issues of communication which shows what blunders the Admiralty made, and which has given rise to conspiracy theories, and serves to compound the unfair finger being pointed at Captain Turner

A photograph of the interior of the House of Commons. The room is grand, with high, vaulted ceilings and extensive wood paneling. Members of the House are seated around a large, dark U-shaped table. The room is decorated with several large paintings on the walls and a central circular portrait. The atmosphere is formal and historic.

On 25th April 1915 information was intercepted by Room 40 that U-30 and U-40 were to proceed to the southern approaches to destroy transports, merchant ships and war ships. Room 40 received further information on 30 April that U-20 had been sighted.

Big Jehr Driscoll's *St Patrick* at Fastnet Rock with U-20



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On the afternoon of 4th May, local stories have recorded that U-20 surfaced South West of the Fastnet Rock to buy fish from local fisherman, Big Jehr Driscoll from Cape Clear. It is thought that the U boat crew gave Big Jehr payment. Whether the U boat crew did or not, it was a war zone and Big Jerh was sensible enough to hand over the fish, which anyone in their sane mind would do if you had the surface guns of a U boat pointing towards you and their torpedoes.

Brow Head Signalling Station – Western end of Crookhaven Harbour



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What is interesting about this encounter is that it has been said locally that it was witnessed by the Light Keepers of the Fastnet Light House who sent communication to the Brow Head Signal Station. No communication is recorded as being received at the Admiralty in London.

Some have said that it is inconceivable that the Signal Officers would not have sent the messages, and that they were lost in a cover up.

On 5th May U 20 spotted the small sailing ship the *Earl of Latham*. So as not to waste torpedoes, the crew were allowed to leave in their lifeboat and the U boat crew put bombs on board and blew her up sinking her cargo of bacon, eggs and potatoes bound for Liverpool.

That evening, the steamer *Cayo Romano* had a lucky escape. She bore a Norwegian flag with neutral marking, but these were 'unusually high', according to Schweiger's diary, and U-20 fired on her without warning. The torpedo missed and the *Cayo Romana* ran for Queenstown.

Queenstown, records show, did not receive warnings from the Admiralty about their earlier intercepts of the intentions of the U boats before Queenstown were alerted by the crew of the *Earl of Latham* and the *Cayo Romana*. A general warning was issued to all ships in the locality by Vice Admiral Coke in Queenstown on a repeated basis that evening but no direct message it seems was sent to the *Lusitania*.

Centurion and Candidate



Project 3: Centurion and Candidate
2011-2012

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U -20 then proceed Eastwards towards Liverpool, passing the Waterford Coast line, where on 6th May she would cause carnage, sinking the *Candidate* en route to Jamaica and then her sister ship the *Centurion* en route to Durban – a dark few hours for the British Harrison Line. A third ship – the White Star Liner, *Arabic* had a lucky escape when fog descended. As she had no visible marking, *Schweiger* saw her as a legitimate target. *Schweiger* was operating the new U boat policy – if in doubt – shoot. Both the *Candidate* and the *Centurion* are entered on the same page in Lloyd's of London's loss book beside the *Lusitania*.

The Admiralty were aware by 9.00am on 7th May of the sinking of the *Centurion* and the *Candidate*. Still no warning was sent to the *Lusitania* which was now close to Brow Head and Mizen Head.

In the meantime Admiral Oliver in the Admiralty prevented the naval battleship *Orion* from leaving Devonport to travel to Scapa Flow to re-join the Grand Fleet because of the danger, and when she did leave on 4th May she was told to stay 100 miles off the Southern Irish Coast. Similar instructions were given to other War ships.

And in January 1915 when U-boats were in operation steps had been taken to divert Cruise liners and provide Destroyer escort, the ships remaining in port for long periods until danger was deemed to have passed, including the *Lusitania*

[This similarly applied to merchant ships such as the *American* and *Hydaspes* in February 1915, both on their way to Liverpool from America.

And the use of the false flags, Q Ships and a ramming order issued by Churchill heightened the danger for the *Lusitania*.]

Warnings in relation to the *Lusitania* herself

In early March 1915, Room 40 intercepted messages detailing the estimated time of the *Lusitania*'s arrival in Liverpool. Specific warnings were sent and her course and speed advised, together with two destroyers deployed by Admiral Oliver to Escort her.

Further messages to submarines were intercepted regarding her return voyage and she was held in Liverpool at the order of the Admiralty until the area was clear of submarines.

It is inexplicable in the circumstances that presented themselves on 6th / 7th May 1915 that the *Lusitania* was not provided with escorts and assistance. Four Warships were available in Milfordhaven – and two Q ships.

Churchill's letter to Lord Runciman, Head of Board of
Trade 12 February 1915



*It is most important to attract
neutral shipping to our shores in
the hope especially of embroiling
the United States with Germany. . .*

*For our part we want the traffic —
the more the better; and if some of
it gets into trouble, better still.*

Revised Churchill's letter to Runciman
12 February 1915



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It has been argued that, in the context of war, the loss of lives on the *Lusitania*, in particular US citizens, would be a catalyst to bring the US into the War. Shortly beforehand the *Falba* had been sunk off the Scilly Isles with the loss of an American which caused uproar here in the US and President Wilson had stern exchanges with Germany putting them on 'strict liability' for any further incident. On 1 May 1915 the *Gulflight* was torpedoed off the Scilly Isles with the loss of 3 US citizens.

Much has been made of a letter by Winston Churchill to Walter Runciman, the president of Britain's Board of Trade. In this letter, Churchill wrote the following:

It is most important to attract neutral shipping to our shores in the hope especially of embroiling the United States with Germany For our part we want the traffic — the more the better; and if some of it gets into trouble, better still.

Of course, as pointed out by a number of commentators the obvious hole in this argument is that while the United States was neutral, the *Lusitania* was clearly a British ship and not "neutral shipping."

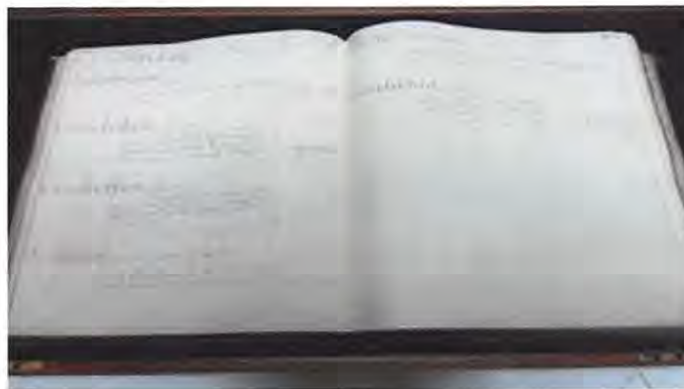
What is clear, and beyond doubt is that in preparing for the Tribunal, the Admiralty wrote to the British Post Office Company who were employing the Marconi Telecommunications Company - requesting copies of their communications with the *Lusitania* in the hours before she sank. They responded enclosing them, at least 5 communications, proving that they exist, but they have been removed from the records. What they said we will never know, probably. Mable Every, Captain Turner's lifelong friend said after he died that he had requested the northern route around Ireland. Just before she was struck she also made a course change and eyewitnesses say she was turning for Queenstown, ironically and tragically putting her in perfect position to be struck on the starboard bow.

In the event, luck plays it part also in tragedy. Fog was to become the down fall of the *Lusitania*. Schweiger continued east towards Liverpool but decided it was too dangerous because without visibility he could not see targets and at short notice they could see the U-20 and ram it. Running low on diesel he started his return journey towards Germany going around the Irish coast, and as we have heard the *Lusitania's* journey had been affected by Fog.

At 11am on 7 May Schweiger heard a vessel overhead. It was the cruiser, HMS *Juno* heading for Queenstown.

Sometime later at around 1330 he surfaced for air and chanced upon the Greyhound of the Seas. He knew it was her. He miscalculated her speed and the Torpedo hit her in precisely the location that would be catastrophic from a distance of 700 yards at 1410.

Lloyd's of London – Loss Book



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Here you see the Lloyd's of London Loss book for those two days, with the *Lusitania*, *Centurion* and *Candidate* entered in the book. Commander Schweiger was Lloyds' enemy number one. Lloyd's kindly sent the actual book to Skibbereen for my talk in July.

The entries are interesting. The shipwreck had been bought from the Liverpool War Risks Association. This was set up for Merchant Ships where they would receive emergency cover if they were under instruction of the Admiralty. It suggests that the *Lusitania* was under the instruction of the Admiralty. If she was an innocent vessel the Lloyd's Policy would have responded not the War Risk Association policy. An instruction to the ship must have come from the Admiralty, either to carry cargo, or otherwise, or both, or else the Lloyd's policy would have responded and the insurer would have the rights over the wreck.

In the event Germany accepted responsibility and paid compensation. The U.S Ambassador in London Walter Page called for the US to join the war. President Wilson was reluctant to. He did however force the Kaiser to stop his shot on sight policy. There is no doubt this assisted the supply situation for the allies, but when Germany took the policy up again in 1917, the US, thank God, did join the war using all the propaganda of the *Lusitania* – collectively with the allies for recruitment with the full truth conveniently brushed under the carpet to maximise the brutal image of the Germans which was critical to helping the Allies win the War.

We will take a break there and then I will finish with, what I believe is the most important thing – to learn from the incident –and perhaps in doing so pay true respect to those who died.

Part Two

International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Safety of Life at Sea Convention – SOLAS 1914



Whatever caused the second explosion, we know that the ship was carrying contraband, she was going through a war zone, and the Admiralty knew clearly the dangers. Conspiracy is unlikely – cock- up is more likely. The ship was under speed because there one boiler was down. The passengers were re-assured she could out run a U Boat, and safety was not thought through. The five P's were absent – Prior Preparation Prevents Poor Performance. It is easy to conclude that there was gross negligence by the Admiralty and Cunard in their duty to the Passengers.

As we know the International Maritime Organisation, where I am representing the International Union of Marine Insurance in relation to the amendment to the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) to improve safety in the Polar Regions, did not exist when the *Lusitania* disaster occurred.

After the *Titanic* the first Safety of Life at Sea Convention had been agreed in 1914.

In my work in relation to pushing for international regulation to be implemented I cite previous disasters and explain that they occurred because of a lack of best practice and I have consistently and constantly said that it usually takes a disaster to promote regulation and then another one to get it implemented.

MV Betelgeuse, Bantry Bay, Ireland



Photo: Ian Vickery

- Whiddy Island
- 8 January 1979
- 50 people killed
- Result – ratification of SOLAS on a worldwide basis thereby implementing simple mandatory rules in relation to inert gas systems

Photo: J. Gifford, The Irish Times

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This is the MV Betelgeuse which exploded at Whiddy Island in Bantry Bay, Co Cork in 1979 – when everyone, 50 people, died – resulting in the actual ratification of SOLAS 1974. Simple inert gas systems that would have prevented the disaster, that had already been suggested, but were not used on board the Betelgeuse, became mandatory.

Alexander L Kielland – Oil Rig 1980, Norway



- 27 March 1980
- 123 people killed
- Result – High level review of Norwegian regulation

Photo: J. Gifford, The Irish Times

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This is the Alexander Kielland disaster in Norwegian waters in 1980 – 123 people died resulting in a high level regulatory review in Norway.

Piper Alpha, UK North Sea 1988



- July 1988
- 167 people killed
- Result—high level review of UK regulatory regime

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This is the Piper Alpha disaster in 1988 in the North Sea – 167 people died resulting in a High level regulatory review in the UK.

Deepwater Horizon 2010



- 20 April 2010
- 11 people killed
- Result—high level review of regulation on an unprecedented level

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And this is the Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 – 11 people died resulting in a high level regulatory review here in the US and worldwide.

Apart from atrocious and unnecessary loss of life, these disasters all have in common a lack of best practice by industry at the time and correct regulation.

The Lusitania is no different as it is the case that SOLAS 1914, despite all the tragedy on the *Titanic*, had not been implemented. It remained unratified. Although the *Lusitania* sank in 18 minutes the number of lifeboats was totally inadequate, no proper drills had been carried out, and crew competence was reported to be poor.

Panic on Board



Painting by J. M. W. Turner, 'Rain, Steam, and Great Railway Bridge', 1844

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The hopelessness of the situation that evolved is tragic. Out of respect I do not want to go into the details of the panic that ensued on the *Lusitania* that day. Suffice to say there was mayhem in trying to launch lifeboats with hinges and shackles jamming, but the fact is there were not enough lifeboats in any event, and over 2000 people had to be catered for on a rapidly sinking ship.

Costa Concordia



Photograph by J. M. W. Turner, 'Rain, Steam, and Great Railway Bridge', 1844

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This is still an issue of great concern today and was a serious problem with the *Costa Concordia* in the Mediterranean in 2012, the South Korean Ferry Tragedy last year, and the last Christmas in the Mediterranean which caught fire, all demonstrating how we have not advanced as far as we should have in being able to evacuate passengers from a rapidly sinking ship that is listing and in difficult conditions. We owe a duty especially when we are building huge passenger ships, to spend money and advance the lifesaving equipment. There should now be quick release life rafts that will save lives. The lessons have still not been learnt, but it was declared by Mr Koji Sekimizu, the Secretary General of the IMO as a matter

of urgent focus. Following Assembly last week we shall see what the new Secretary General does to drive this issue.

I do not wish to criticise the crew of the *Lusitania* like others have done *ad lib* because that is easily done, and most of them did not survive to answer for themselves. The ship was in terrible distress, and the panic on board was no doubt immeasurable.

But I will criticise the Cunard line for not adopting suggested standards and best practice. After the Titanic sank, the *Lusitania* and *Mauretania* were only equipped with an additional six more wooden boats under davits, making for a total of 22 boats rigged in davits. The rest of their lifeboat accommodations were supplemented with collapsible lifeboats and life-rafts which needed assembly in the event they had to be used. This contrasted with the *Olympic* and the *Britannic* which received a full complement of lifeboats all rigged under davits. This difference would prove key in the *Lusitania* sinking in that there was simply no time to assemble collapsible boats or life-rafts. When *Britannic*, working as a hospital ship, sank in 1916 after hitting a mine in the Aegean Sea the already davited boats were swiftly lowered saving nearly all on board.

And I will criticise the Government for not ratifying the draft regulations. Great work is carried out by our World Delegations, in the case of the US, by the United States Coastguard. It is not good enough that Governments do not then follow up on the hard work and act upon it. This is one of the lessons we can learn from the *Lusitania* in honour of those who died in relation to proposed regulation that exists today.

International Convention on Pollution from fixed structures – still in draft since 1977
Torremolinos Convention on Fishing boats safety – still in draft since 1977



Photos: E. Carfagna, Not for distribution
02/19/2019 10:00:00 AM

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The complacency or inability at Government level to get the job done, and the lack of drive is sometimes quite staggering. There are some great individuals but it seems there is not the same drive to do what should be done to protect citizens and the environment, as there is to

meet in Davos and talk about the great deals and the handshakes, paid for by the very tax payers who are being failed to be protected by not pushing through safety and environmental regulation, ignoring the hard work of IMO Delegations. There are two stark examples - the Torremolinos Convention for fishing boat safety – lying on Government shelves since 1977 – and only ratified by the Netherlands, Norway and Iceland, and the Convention for pollution from fixed structures, also adopted in 1977, and not yet ratified.

In the meantime thousands of lives have been lost in the fishing industry, and we have no international regulation surrounding pollution incidents from fixed structure such as the Deep Water Horizon Disaster. I am aware of the great work of the USCG in the Deepwater Horizon Reviews and the recommendations in their report which I hope the US Government will act upon fully.

Lusitania SOS - The legal Duty to respond



• First message:

'come at once big list...position ten miles southwest of Kinsale'

• Then a second message

..want assistance...listing badly...

Then power was lost



I will now turn to the duty to respond, another lesson for today that we must learn from the *Lusitania*. The heroics of the local Courtmacsharry Lifeboat demonstrate the incredible importance of ships to go to the assistance of the *Lusitania*. The water is cold at the beginning of May off Co. Cork. Hyperthermia will set in quickly. Many local boats performed great heroics that day – which was well documented in the commemorations. Indeed the incredible volunteerism of the rescue services, fishermen, and others along the coast of West Cork, and indeed around Ireland, was demonstrated again in the rescue attempts for the 3 people who drowned that I mentioned at the outset. That is no different here in your incredible Coastguard Service.

The Ships wireless operator managed to send an SOS *'come at once big list...position ten miles southwest of Kinsale....'*

Then a second message *..want assistance...listing badly...*

Admiral Coke sent out tugs, trawlers and luggers from Queenstown.

A fishing boat close by the *Wanderer* managed to take on 200 people from 3 lifeboats and tow two further lifeboats into Kinsale.

Another fishing vessel, the *Dan O Connell*, rescued 18 people and took on 60 bodies. The *Dan O Connell* had only two days earlier rescued the crew of the *Earl of Latham*.

There were many other heroics carried out that day – and as hard and painful as it is for the Patricia's family to have suffered the loss of John and his daughter Margaret, I know how grateful they are for the life of Mrs Coughlan and her two sons, both United States Citizens, and perhaps without Captain Ball of the *Wanderer*, Tim Keohane of the Courtmacsharry Lifeboat, and all the others who responded that day, upholding their ancient seafaring duty to help fellow seafarers, which the USCG do on a constant basis, then the tragedy for Patricia's family may have been even worse.

Legal Duty to Respond – Brussels Convention 1910



- Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules of Law respecting Assistance and Salvage at Sea
- (Brussels, 23 September 1910)
- Article 11
- *"Every master is bound, so far as he can do so without serious danger to his vessel, her crew and her passengers, to render assistance to everybody, even though an enemy, found at sea in danger of being lost"*



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The legal Duty to respond ON 07 May 1915 was enshrined in the **Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules of Law respecting Assistance and Salvage at Sea** (Brussels, 23 September 1910)

Article 11

"Every master is bound, so far as he can do so without serious danger to his vessel, her crew and her passengers, to render assistance to everybody, even though an enemy found at sea in danger of being lost"

It was ratified by most European nations including Great Britain and Germany between January 1913 and March 1913.

Two vessels are conspicuous by their absence to respond to the innocent civilians that day who were in cold water and needed to get out of it fast – the British Navy Cruiser, *JUNO*, which left Queenstown and by far stood the greatest chance of getting to the scene fast, and indeed the U-boat herself.

Of course, it would have taken an act of huge moral courage for Captain Schweiger to go in amongst the carnage he had caused, but his own account says that the consequences of his actions were not intended to be so catastrophic. In watching and allowing all those innocent people die through his periscope when he could have saved some of them was strictly speaking a further breach of international law. The law clearly states that you assist an enemy. Schweiger could then have arranged a safe offloading using the survivors as human shields – possibly. Indeed in the first sinking of a Merchant vessel, *Giltra* on 20 October 1914, U-17 towed the lifeboats close to land.

The Naval Cruiser *Juno*, for reasons that have never been explained was called back in; it is thought by instruction from the Admiralty in London by one of the famous missing telegrams. Admiral Coke clearly sent her out initially, but she turned around at Roches Point outside Cork Harbour. This was an act also contrary to the Brussels Convention. Put simply, despite the dangers the *Juno* should have responded, and the Admiralty should have put the vessel at risk for the greater good of trying to save innocent civilians. Needless to say this communication did not come out either in the Mersey Report.



When I did this talk in London on the 100th Anniversary I raised this very important issue and said it is as relevant today as it was on 07 May 1915 and in honour of those who died in the *Lusitania* and in their memory I hoped we could collectively help to try and do something about it.

I was referring in particular to the Migrant Tragedies in the Mediterranean. Just one week before the talk over 1000 people died in a few days. These tragedies have been going on for

several years, and the Headmaster of the School I attended, Downside, Fr Leo Maidlow-Davis, who attended the talk in Hammersmith, had been trying to raise awareness and get our leaders to do the right thing and I said I would try in some small way to help him. These are horrific tragedies and on a human level are no different to the loss of life on the *Lusitania*.

However, our fellow human beings, desperate to flee to safety and being ripped off by unscrupulous traffickers, do not have an Admiralty Propaganda Machine. And despite being fellow human beings they were not deemed to be worthy enough of our assistance, with our landed estates and hundreds of millions in our bank account, and they in decrepit leaking boats. It is worth remembering that that did not help Alfred Gwynne when he sadly perished in the *Lusitania* and left an estate of 43 million dollars.

The laws today about the duty to respond are clear:

The same duty that existed in 1915 is enshrined in not just one but several conventions:

Search and Rescue Convention;

Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS):

The U.N. Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS); and

The International Convention of Salvage (1989) ("Salvage Convention").

All conventions essentially state that a captain of a ship once notified of persons in distress shall proceed with all speed to their assistance.

PUMA – Volvo Round the World Race 2011-2012



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I myself have personal experience of the neglect of the duty to respond when my brother in law Kelvin Harrap was in the Volvo round the world race in November 2011 and in the lead heading to Cape Town with the United States team, PUMA, when PUMA's mast catastrophically failed in the Southern Ocean...

PUMA – Volvo Round the World Race 2011-2012



Photo: J. Carpentier, for the author
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...thousands of miles from land – East to South Africa and West to Brazil being almost 2,500 miles.

Captain Bondar to the rescue

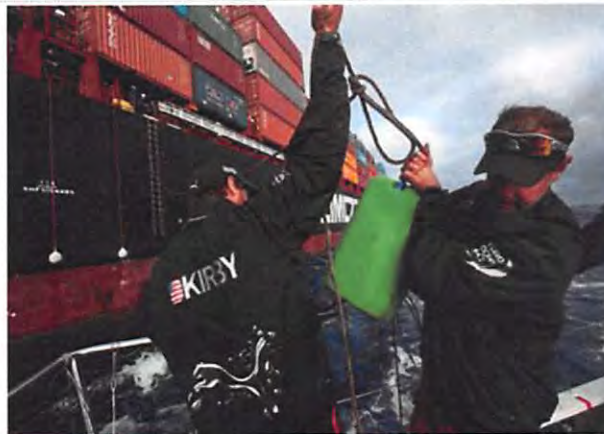


Photo: J. Carpentier, for the author
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They sent out an SOS and were ignored by 5 ships until Russian Captain Bondar came to their rescue and gave them enough fuel to get to Tristan Da Chuna, the remotest island on the planet.

Tristan da Chuna



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2017-10-10 10:11:00

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While they were climbing a mountain on the remote Island, unbelievably given modern email communication we were able to email them,

Nice afternoon in the middle of nowhere looking for Yellow-nosed albatross



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2017-10-10 10:11:00

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and we tried to encourage them and explained how fortunate they were, how lucky they were to have modern communication commercialised by Marconi on Brow Head, Kelvins adopted home, and we said that they would re-join the fleet:

Where there is a will there is a way



And come around the Fastnet in first place.

They duly did.

PUMA Passes Mizen Head and Brow Head in First Place on last leg heading for Galway – July 2012



And we said that in passing Brow Head on the way to the finishing line in Galway that they must turn to the North East as they round Brow Head and raise their arm in salute to the incredible invention that had saved them – and that we would be there to welcome them – and we were.

Welcome home Kelvin and Puma – Thank you Captain Bondar and Tristan da Chuna



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You honour seafarers who do great acts, who abide by the duty that underpins seafaring. When I was asked last October by the Viking Ice Council consisting of many Captains of the Arctic, to present at their conference in St Petersburg I took the opportunity to thank the seafaring community of Russia for the kind act of Captain Bondar. They in turn thanked me for my work on the Polar Code and presented me with the pin clip of the North Sea Route Administration.

Participating in Independence Day Parade 2012 Galway with US Team Puma



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And it was a matter of huge honour for me to participate with PUMA in the Independence Day parade in Galway when they arrived.

I said in Hammersmith that we need to uphold always our duty to rescue our fellow human being and urgently address properly the Mediterranean crisis.

Ireland's Naval Fleet Rescuing in the Mediterranean – Upholding Ireland's Moral Duty



After that talk, it has been a matter of enormous pride to see the Irish Naval Vessels not just rescuing 1000's of people but bringing new life into this world. These seafarers are based in the same Harbour as the vessels that went to the rescue of the Lusitania.

However in terms of a solution, the response has been totally inadequate, emergency meetings taking months to organise. However in highlighting the Duty to Rescue through the Lusitania this has helped me to broker a meeting for the Secretary General of the International Chamber of Shipping, Peter Hinchliffe with the United Nations Spokesman on Migrants where we have proposed a 'Humanitarian Assistance Zone' to be manned by the United Nations that would control the flow of migrants, set up camps in North Africa and allow genuine migrants to travel in assigned ferries. Quite why Governments in Europe have not done this defies belief, and now terrorists have been allowed to infiltrate this dysfunctional mess. As you know only too well it is left up to the Merchant Fleets and the Coastguard to carry the burden for everyone else in that absence of a defined plan. The meeting took place in London the week before last and the UN Spokesman for migrants is strongly in favour.

The final lesson to be learnt, which I have already touched upon is Rules of Engagement in War. The Lusitania was a complete breach of international regulation. The moral boundaries kept breaking in the Great War until it became a race to the bottom, and such profound barriers have in recent years sunk to new depths with the evolution of suicide bombers, and what we witnessed in Paris just a few weeks ago was pure wickedness on a terrible scale. War is of course different to Terrorism, but both incidents show what depths of depravity the human race can reach without rules of law, and enforcement of these rules.

Speaking of honour at sea, I also believe that Captain Turner was an honourable man who was made a scapegoat for blundering inefficiency by the Admiralty, as he was a man who had carried out acts of great bravery. He previously saved a young boy by diving into freezing water in Liverpool and rescued stranded seafarers in the Mid Atlantic. He also remained on the Bridge of the *Lusitania* according to eyewitnesses until he was sucked out of it.

Passenger Death list

	Total	Survived	Died	Survival rate
Saloon (First Class)	290	113	177	39.0%
Second Cabin (Second Class)	601	229	372	38.1%
Third Class	370	134	236	36.2%
Deported Seamen (Third Class)	3	0	3	0.0%
Total Passengers	1,264	476	788	37.7%
Stowaways	3	0	3	0.0%
Band	9	3	6	33.3%
Deck Crew	69	37	32	53.6%
Engineering Crew	313	112	201	35.8%
Victualling Crew	306	139	167	45.4%
Total Crew (including Band)	693	291	402	42.0%
Total Complement (with stowaways)	1,960	767	1,193	39.1%

- Band Robert and George Durness Robert
 Robertson James Scott 1900
 - Hoisting and Landing Hoisting The Lusitania
 Captain Scott 1900

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Finally the human element of the tragedy on this 100th Anniversary is the most important consideration and it is, in a very poignant way, linked to the Mediterranean tragedies.

The *Lusitania* for Irish people was not just this incredible wonder of the world passing our shore; she was a symbol of hope and safety for Irish people who had been through so much despair throughout the 19th Century. Cunard had never lost a ship in the previous 50 years of existence, unlike every other company.

Prior to the arrival of these liners, and in particular the comfort for the third class passengers on the *Lusitania* herself, particularly in the Great Irish famine there was a high chance, just like in the Mediterranean today, that if you boarded a trans-Atlantic ship of emigration you would die on board of illness in terrible conditions, or in a sinking. Between 1847 and 1853 59 emigrant ships 'coffin ships' passed the Tear Drop of Ireland and floundered. Thousands died on board. Many are buried in mass graves in Canada, something that I learned so much more about when I met my relation, the Canadian Ambassador to Ireland. Kevin Vickers, in Dublin on Friday on my way here when we were discussing this. His Kingston family emigrated there in 1826. He told me about how there are over 5000 Irish migrants buried on Grosse Isle, (Big Island), located on the Saint Lawrence River not far from Quebec City. They would have contracted cholera and or typhus on their journey from Ireland. There were reports of catholic nuns removing infant babies from the corpses of their dead mothers. In Ambassador Vickers hometown, Miramichi, New Brunswick there is Middle Island where three ships landed during

the summer of 1847. The *Loustuck*, The *Bolivar* and the *Ritchie White*. The deck of the *Loustuck* was covered in corpses. The boats had no intention of coming to Miramichi, they were on their way to Quebec. But the ships's crew were overcome with Cholera and Typhus so they had to make the nearest port. She left Liverpool for Quebec with 462 passengers on board. During the first two weeks at sea more than 100 died of sickness and the majority of the crew contracted severe fever and were unfit for duty. With only a few able seamen available to man the ship and few other options, the Captain headed to the nearest port - Miramichi. When news of the dire conditions on board became known she was forbidden by the port authorities to dock even at Middle Island. The Captain could not get permission to land the sick and dying or to bury the dead for over six days in which further severe anguish and the loss of forty more lives occurred. The arrival of two more famine ships the *Ritchie White* and the *Bolivar* further exacerbated the problem. The authorities finally but reluctantly constructed temporary shelters on the island and allowed the sick passengers and crew to land. A further fifty or so people died in the makeshift facilities provided, including the young Chatham doctor John Vondy who volunteered to stay full-time to administer to the sick and dying and within a few days succumbed to the fever himself.

Ambassador Vickers is the man who carried out an act of enormous bravery in the Ottawa Parliament when he apprehended a terrorist in October 2015. We are very proud that he chose to be Ambassador to Ireland, and so is his 88 year old mother, who he took 'home' to Bantry Bay this year. He sends his regards to the Unites States Coastguard.

The *Lusitania* was therefore a symbol of hope for our emigrants' ancestors, with 3rd class passengers travelling in comfort and safety backwards and forwards to the US. For such a ship to be deliberately sunk was inconceivable.

And in the world of emigration the *Lusitania* is a story of that hope brutally taken away. Contrary to the accusation and presumption about the Mediterranean migrants moving to Europe for good, it overlooks the simple fact that most of those people have no other avenue of hope. I remember clearly an article from the Sunday Times on 26 April about a Syrian Doctor who lost his wife and daughter when their boat sank. It was sunk by armed militia. How that man would love to return to his country, which he did not want to leave in the first place, if he could. He had no choice but to leave in desperate circumstances.

Mick Kingston
GoleenMary Kingston (nee Keohane)
Clonakilty

Running for the GAA in London in 1920's (1927 - Herne Hill - during Cork - Tipperary hurling Exhibition match)

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Technically I am an Irish emigrant, as I live in London, but I care deeply about my homeland. In the 1890's my great-grandfather, Mick Kingston, from Dunmanus in the Parish of Goleen left Ireland. The Copper mines had dried up, there was another famine. There was no hope. At the same time, Patricia Sheehan's Great Uncles John and Jerry Coughlan left Corran More in the Parish of Goleen. The Coughlan's went to chance their arm in the mines of Beute in Montana. Mick Kingston only had the fare to Liverpool and headed to work on the docks in East London. He is buried in Leytonstone Cemetery with my great grandmother, Mary Keohane from Clonakilty.

Running for the GAA in London in 1920's (1927 - Herne Hill - during Cork - Tipperary hurling Exhibition match)



Running for the GAA in London in 1920's (1927 - Herne Hill - during Cork - Tipperary hurling Exhibition match)

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My Grandfather, Michael Kingston was born in Canning Town, London. He was educated by St Mary's University, a University that gave his generation hope. It gave us all hope and he was able to get a good job as a teacher in West Ham, educating two generations of West Ham United footballers who then helped England win the football world cup in 1966! He was also a champion athlete, holding the Gaelic Athletic Association record in the Shot Put, Long Jump, ¼ mile or 110 Yards between 1924 and 1933.

**Importance of St Mary's University – Michael Kingston -
Stamford Bridge – August 24th 1929 England v Germany
running for St Mary's & Surrey**



Printed & Published by the London
Globe & Planet Press

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Here you see him running at Stamford Bridge in 1928 for Surrey and St Mary's University. I highlight this because I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to that University for all they have done for Irish people over the years, educating so many of us when we did not have many other avenues. I would not be here today had my grandfather not received that education. I would also like to thank them in conjunction with the Irish Cultural Centre for the support they give the Irish Community, and for running their centennial lectures series. And I would also like to thank the Irish Abroad Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs for supporting them. The fact that this lectures is taking place here today is a direct result of the work of St Mary and the Irish Cultural Centre, Dr Ivan Gibbons of St Mary's University, and the manager at the cultural Centre, Collette Mackin, deserve a special thank you.

**Sending Money Home to build Boat
Dunmanus, Goleen, Co Cork**



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Going back to my Grandfather he, like so many other Irish abroad, sent money home to have a boat built for his Uncle in Goleen in the very tough 1930's. He adored his country of origin and was determined to get his family back there, which he eventually did.

The Mungovans of Clare – Passengers to America & back

As an example of the use of steam ships by rural Irish men and women the following is a list of Tom's grandfather's uncles and aunts who travelled from Scarriff to New York.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| • Mary in 1904 on the Teutonic | • Mary in 1904 on the Teutonic |
| • Ellie in 1906 on the Majestic (1890) | • John in 1907 on the Ceciro |
| • Denis in 1909 on the Teutonic | • Ann in 1911 on the Majestic (1890) |
| • Della in 1911 on the Baltic | • Patrick in 1912 on the Adriatic |
| • Patrick in 1913 on the Ceciro | • Della in 1922 on the Olympic |
| • Margaret in 1922 on the Ceciro | • Kate in 1922 on the Ceciro |
| • Ann in 1930 on the Cleveland | |

Although we do not have the records for the crossing from NYC to Ireland, it can be seen from the above that of the 9 relatives above, half of them made at least three trips across the Atlantic.

This was no different to many families who travelled backwards and forwards to the US. Here is the history of my friend Tom Mungovan, whose family left Ireland for the US and returned safely to Clare, like so many others and probably many of the families of those present today. They were able to do so because of these great liners. We would not be here today were it not for those ships.

John Coughlan and Kate Coughlan (nee O'Neill) and Children: John, Jeremiah, Margaret
Goleen Castletownbere



It was no different for Patricia's great Uncle, John Coughlan from the townland of Corran Moore in my home village of Goleen, or Jack as he was known, and his wife Kate from Castletownbere, also in Co Cork, who he met in America. Their tragedy, undocumented in all the books about other stories, most concentrating on a First class passenger from Cork, Sir Hugh Lane, the great art collector, who sadly lost his life.

Like Sir Hugh Lane, John Coughlan was 39 too, however he was a third class passenger, but his story is more symptomatic of what these ships and in particular the *Lusitania* meant to

Ireland, her past and her hope. It must be one of the saddest stories of all about the *Lusitania*. Having travelled to America he was desperately homesick and was offered the possibility to come home and work with his father and eventually take over the family farm. He embarked on the *Lusitania* with his wife Kate and their three children, Margaret, John and Jeremiah, all children U.S citizens.

View of Brow Head and the trans-Atlantic shipping lane from close to Coughlan Home at Barleycove



The Coughlan farm is in Corran More overlooking Barleycove Bay in between Mizen Head and Brow Head. The Farm faces out towards the shipping lanes. In the foreground here you can see Brow Head and south again is the Fastnet Rock.

Waiting for Jack at home in Corran More on the morning of the 7 May 1915 was his sister – Margaret and her mother and father. The Coughlans would have awoken to fog that morning, the same fog that Captain Turner was cautiously traveling through. As it lifted on board Captain Turner is recorded as taking his first bearings from Brow Head. If Captain Turner could see Brow Head, Jack Coughlan could recognise it easily and in the very distance see the outline of his home in Corran Moore, a home that he had not seen for years, but where he longed to be. The leap of excitement in his heart to be so close to home and the excitement in showing his children and Kate must have been immeasurable. Similarly the Coughlans, had they been looking out to the shipping lane, which they almost certainly were, as they would be alerted by equally excited neighbours, would have seen the great ship in the distance.

Southern Star- Notice of Margaret Coughlan RIP



The grief that visited the Coughlan family that afternoon is something that is indescribable unless it has been experienced. Kate Coughlan had to desperately look for her two sons and daughter, amongst the terrible scenes in Queenstown, finding only her two sons. She then had to make the journey to Barleycove, a place she had never been, with her daughter's coffin, and no trace of her husband, who was never found. She had to rebuild her life.

But, she was made of stern West Cork stuff. As one Newspaper article said about Kate Coughlan '

Mrs Coughlan, is a fine type of womanhood and about thirty-five years of age, who appeared to bear her terrible ordeal with characteristic Irish bravery'

Another Great Grandniece of John Coughlan, who was in Hammersmith, and who writes with the Sunday Times, Margarete Driscoll, wrote a brilliant article in the Sunday Times in April explaining about how such a tragedy, its shock and trauma, never leaves your family and it resonates very much still today. Margarete also spoke for all the families of the victims of the Lusitania when she said she owes her existence to them. Had the tragedy not occurred, her grandmother, Margaret would have emigrated to America as soon as Jack arrived home. She would not have married her Grandfather, John O Driscoll from Cape Clear.

The human consequences were felt on all sides. And in the circle of life and the consequences of what we do in war, and the need for the protection of civilians and the rules of engagement, there are in this tragedy, which I have discussed briefly with Margarete, some extraordinary co-incidents and connection.

Big Jehr Driscoll's Boat at the Fastnet with Commander Schweiger



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Big Jehr Driscoll who gave fish to Captain Schweiger could well and probably is a relation of John O Driscoll who Margaret married instead of going to America.

Southern Star Article re Long Island – Life Boat 'Lusitania 22A Liverpool'

where a motor boat the 'Lusitania' owned by Victor H. Cave and skippered by Tim O'Donovan, recovered more off Galley Head.

LONG ISLAND: Off Fastnet, Long Island fishermen, Michael Regan, James Driscoll and John Regan fishing in a yawl on Tuesday evening found an upturned lifeboat painted "22A, Lusitania, Liverpool." When the boat was righted six bodies were released. One lady was identified by papers as Mrs. A.S. Taylor of Dorchester, Mass., having a letter of introduction to Mrs. A. Rice, 25 Perth St., West Denby Road, Liverpool. The body of another lady carried cards written to Miss J. Highfield Jones Falkener Road, Perthshire, and to Miss Duck, 10 High Street, Bushy Perts. Another lady had her baby boy clasped to her by a lifebelt, and the sixth body was that of a four year old boy.

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The lifeboat that was found near Long Island with victims inside, including tragically a woman with her child strapped to her was found by fishermen John Regan and James Driscoll, another possible relation.

Ulrika Schweiger's letter to Dr Neville, Goleen



• Dear Tom

- Thank you for your letter in regard to the liner, Lusitania. My Walther only ever followed orders of the U-boat Command. On his return, when Walther saw the pictures in the Irish Press he was horrified. No honours from the Navy or Germany did he ever get. The U-Boat Recognition Log, and the 1914 copy of Jane's Fighting Ships, indicated that the Lusitania was in fact an armed merchant cruiser. The War Pilot, (a merchant marine officer carried on WW1 U-Boats), carried on U20 confirmed this. But it was all lies; as Walther saw for himself in the Irish Press. The English politicians and the Royal Navy, set a trap of lies for the Americans and the liner was used as bait.
- Walther was not later lost. This was also lies.
- Walther never got over the shame and horror of what he had done to those unfortunate people on the liner. This was the reason he was found dead in the forest on Wednesday 8th September 1915.....
- With love Ulrika

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And most extraordinarily of all is the story about the U boat Captain. The official records claim that Walter Schweiger went on to sink further allied vessels and was later killed with all crew on U-88.

My Gran Aunt, Mary O Mahony was a relief doctor in Goleen. She was friends with the Parish Doctor Tom Neville, and with the Doctor in Schull Dr Shipsey, and with Margarette's Great Grandmother, who was the midwife on Cape Clear. In this medical circle of friends there was a rumour that there was a connection with the U boat Captain from before the war. The Shipsey family were close to the Nevilles and they have in their records an extraordinary letter from the wife of Walter Schweiger to Dr Neville in 1925 which is published in the local Co Cork, Mizen Journal.

It seems indeed very plausible that they were friends before the war – like so many people were between the Allies and Germany, and perhaps it sums up what we can do to each other and what it does to us when we get embroiled in war and lose sight of the rule of law and the moral compass, allowing unbridled Nationalism to unfurl its claws:

Dear Tom

Thank you for your letter. In regard to the liner, Lusitania, my Walther only ever followed orders of the U-boat Command. On his return, when Walther saw the pictures in the Irish Press he was horrified. No honours from the Navy or, Germany did he ever get. The U- Boat Recognition Log, and the 1914 copy of Janes Fighting Ships, indicated that the Lusitania was in fact an armed merchant cruiser. The War Pilot, (a merchant marine officer carried on WW1 U-Boats), carried on U20 confirmed this. But it was all lies; as Walther saw for himself in the Irish Press. The English

politicians and the Royal Navy, set a trap of lies for the Americans, and the liner was used as bait.

Walther was not later lost.. This was also lies.

Walther never got over the shame and horror of what he had done to those unfortunate people on the liner. This was the reason he was found dead in the forest on Wednesday 8th September 1915.

With love Ulrika

Whether this is true or not, and it requires further investigation, it does highlight the guilt that Walter Schweiger would have had to go through if he was remotely human.

So if we can learn anything today in thinking about all of John and Margaret Coughlan, and Alfred Gwynne and Hugh Lane, and all those who died let us remember that without the rule of law we descend into chaos and end up hurting ourselves and those who we know.

We need clear and unequivocal rules of engagement:

We need safety systems and rules surrounding safety systems to be enshrined in our international and domestic regulation – and particularly we need to look further at upgrading life rafts on passenger ships to escape rapidly sinking ships – and we need our Governments to show leadership and ratify changes: and our seafarers and our leaders must always uphold the duty to rescue.

In thinking of what the great liners meant to Ireland and Irish people and in thinking of John Coughlan and his daughter Margaret, they were not alone in their final moments.

Irish Horn Rosary Beads



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All Irish people of that time carried the Irish Horn Rosary Bead. Here is one from my pocket. When President John F Kennedy was shot in Texas he was carrying his, which was kindly donated to his ancestral home in Wexford by his wife Jacqueline. And I have no doubt whatsoever that John Coughlan and many others on the Lusitania had theirs to comfort them wherever their final resting place is.

Fr Conleith Coughlan (John) and his Brother Bernard (Jeremiah Bernard) 1961



Photo © Conleith Coughlan, no restrictions
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This is a picture of the two young Coughlan boys who survived. One, John became a wonderful priest.

Finally, whenever my Grandmother, Nora O Mahony, who was a publican and a merchant in Goleen Co Cork heard that someone was emigrating she would give them a set of Irish Horn Rosary Beads, and a copy of a poem she had written about emigration, the symbol of hope which was recited on board those mighty liners which meant so much to Ireland. I will finish this talk by reading it to you. Many copies and sets of Rosary Beads will be in attics and drawers across the United States. I myself always remember when a man called Patrick O Donovan returned to Ireland in the 1980's to retire. He put his Irish Horn Rosary Beads up on the bar in my Aunt's pub and said that they, together with the poem, got him through the Korean War as a US soldier.

The Emigrants Poem - Goleen



Photo: J. Conboy. Via the author.



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When listening to the poem, do not just think of all those who travelled on the Lusitania, who hopes were dashed on 07 May 1915 but think of all those who are in the Mediterranean today with their rosary beads - who come from their Goleen, or Skibbereen, or Kinsale, or Cobh, or Montana, or Ohio or Pennsylvania and who have hope to succeed. In honour of those who died on the Lusitania, there could be no more fitting tribute than if we could continue to press our leaders to uphold the ancient law that underpins seafaring – the duty to rescue, and to help these people have a future, and really push to get the Humanitarian Assistance Zone implemented in the Mediterranean as soon as possible.

Let us also think of all Irish people and the Service Men and Women of the United States abroad today, and also the victims of the Berkeley balcony tragedy, as we have the fortune to be here in this incredible place of your land: your capital, Washington D.C.

And before I read the poem I wish to thank you again for asking me here. You, each and every one of you in the United States Coastguard, do your country proud in the work that you do. I have seen that hard work and I acknowledge the brilliant leadership of Captain, Mauger, Jeff Lantz, Rear Admiral Thomas, LT Gibbons and all their colleagues, and I am honoured to work with you and thank you for all your hard work across the world. When we work together we can indeed make a difference.

By Nora Sheehan (nee O Mahony), The Corner House, Goleen Co Cork, Ireland

*Though you have travelled far from Goleen
O'er foreign land and sea,
Even if success has crowned your enterprise
And your heart seems bright and free*



*Yet you may think you are contented
Amongst an alien race
Yet down in memory's valley, back somewhere
There is a sweet recollection of your dear native place*

*It keeps pulling at your heart strings
And you sometimes hear the call
Just to be there once again
You'd gladly forfeit all*

*You may be in a city fair
With buildings majestic and grand
Away down East or in Wild West
Or in some other foreign land*

*At all events it's probably a little town of not much renown
A village, nothing more
Where peace and happiness abide
And men and women around every door*

*Greet one and all with kindly cheer
And friendship strong and true
And that is the little hamlet
That oftentimes calls to you*

*It nestles softly in a creek near the sea
On Erin's south western shore
And in the murmur of the waves
You hear the alien's call once more*

*It may be in a letter
Or perchance a bit of Irish lace
A meagre piece of news from home
Or well remembered face*

*But whenever you hear or feel the call
There comes a well loved scene
Of home, friends, departed parents
And the village of Goleen*

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- Nora Kingston (sister) – London & Cork



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And additionally I am extremely grateful for the assistance of Ambassador Kevin Vickers, Canadian Ambassador to Ireland.

Thank you very much.

Michael Kingston

United States Coastguard Headquarters

Washington D.C

07 December 2015



Recipient of US Coast Guard Challenge
Coin Award
Washington D.C. July 2015
Safety of Life at Sea



